



Viking Saga



NORTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL

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MAY 2022

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Girls take a swing at tennis

EMELIA RICHLING
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

As the seven Northwest tennis players step on the court for the spring season, they are not only walking into a new year but an entirely new experience, as all of the players are competing for the first time.

"I love to meet the players and watch them improve," said James Lowry, the coach of 17 years. "It is like having beginner tennis lessons, and some have improved quite a bit in a hurry."

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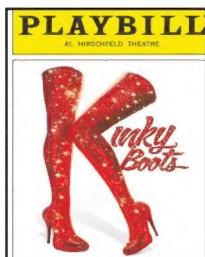
Photo courtesy of Abigail Trausch

Freshman Kensley Mann perfects her serve at Ryder Park during afterschool practice.



Musical Update

After the rejection of *Kinky Boots*, choir students await their next musical.



Teachers Leaving

Kenzie Mollring, Mark Freeling and Shane Fernau are leaving Northwest this year.



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Writing Award

Sophomore Aarya Bhatt won UNK's Emerging Writer's Contest with his short-story titled "The Boy".



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"Arcane" Review

"Arcane" is a science-fiction show based on the game "League of Legends."



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JORDAN JENIK
DISTRUBUTION MANAGER



In recent years, many people have started calling others out for “ableism,” which by definition according to Oxford Languages, is discrimination in favor of able-bodied people. However, it’s hard to tell what is actually ableism and what isn’t, especially when people mix up the meaning. Simply using a different font on Twitter could get you called ableist, when in reality, ableism is far from a word just thrown around in dramatic debates.

Ableism in schools is a big deal. It can prohibit a student’s ability to learn and even make the pupil dislike going to school. There are two barriers that prevent handicapped students from being able to participate in their education; physical and systematic. Physical barriers can come in the form of limited or no access to ramps/elevators, emphasis on hand-writing in class or even accessible extra curricular activities (space, programs, support, etc.) And these are just a handful of the examples. Systematic barriers can include use of inappropriate, derogatory or outdated language, expectations of students to complete certain tasks without modifications, stereotypes and the lack of

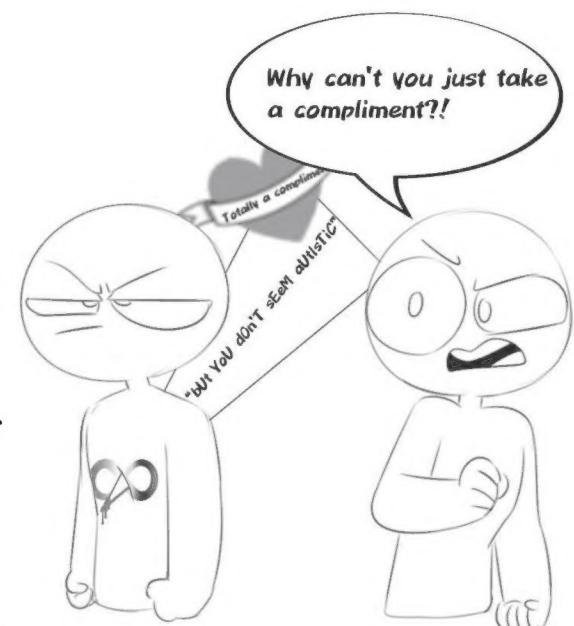
recognition of disability culture. (most disabled persons enjoy the culture around it and being disabled).

However, physically disabled persons aren’t the only ones affected by ableism in schools. Mentally handicapped people also get the brunt of it. From being bullied or not given aid during classes, persons with autism, ADHD or OCD struggle in schools daily. From teachers to students, ableism is persistent in schools – whether we like it or not. Sometimes, a peer might not even know they’re being ableist. Using the “r-word” or comparing one neurodivergent person to another are a few examples of this (Yes, those “Oh, but you don’t seem autistic” comments are not the compliments you might think they are).

Another issue comes from babying disabled persons or treating them like they’re broken. It isn’t fun to be treated differently just because you are different from others in the way your brain works. Being paraded like a show animal or being a token friend to someone trying to seem nice isn’t fun for anyone. It can actually feel quite discriminatory to disabled people— and it is. People shouldn’t be treated differently just because they require extra

help sometimes.

Yet, some of these issues are just as easy to fix. If you aren’t sure whether something could be offensive to a disabled person (or any person, really), you can always ask someone or don’t say it at all. Even looking things up on your own time and educating yourself on these issues can save the hassle of someone getting frustrated at you later (no, Autism Speaks is not a reliable resource, putting that out there now). Informing yourself is important, and Google is a great resource right at your fingertips to learn something new.



Cartoon courtesy of Audrianna Wiseman

Understanding mental health is a priority

CASEY PAYNE
STAFF WRITER

Many people are unaware of how to take care of mental health and what can cause issues with it. Being in high school is rough for a lot of teens, and during this time period, taking care of a teenager's health, especially mental, is crucial.

The human brain is maturing towards its full capabilities around the teenage years. During this time of brain development, it becomes more difficult to make beneficial decisions and to manage intense emotions.

During these years, new cognitive thinking skills are developed. These skills are used when processing and remembering information.

Teenagers are also more vulnerable to mental illnesses during this time when the brain is under mass construction. According to psychiatry.org, 50% of mental illnesses begin at the young age of 14. But why are teenagers more likely to develop a mental illness?

In the midst of all these needed emotional, physical, and extreme mental changes, room remains for negative transformations in the brain. According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, "the most common mental illnesses in adolescents are anxiety, mood, attention, and behavior disorders."

Anxiety disorders include general anxiety disorder, social anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, and post traumatic stress disorder. A few mood disorders are major depressive disorder and bipolar disorder. The main attention disorder is attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Some other behavior

disorders are conduct disorder and oppositional defiant disorder.

For each disorder there are triggers or risk factors. Many teens are exposed to several of these. For example, the risk factors for anxiety are a history of depression or other mental disorder, increased demands, stressful environments, early or significant losses, chronic illness, history of being bullied and history of alcohol or substance use.

Teens are more likely to develop a mental illness as opposed to adults since teens' brains are still developing and are more vulnerable.

Not all mental illnesses are developed however. Some are hereditary and other mental illnesses appear due to environmental factors.

There are many ways to take care of your mental health, even if you do have a disorder. Remember that everyone is different and it is best to find what works for you.

Many things help with your mental health. These include drinking plenty of water, eating correctly, and exercising. Science has proven on multiple occasions that your physical health has a lot to do with your mental health. Doing something that simply makes you happy can help bring your mood up and help take care of your mental health.

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Keep in mind that everyone copes differently.

If you're ever struggling, there are also several hotlines and numbers to call. There is the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (1-800-662 HELP) and there's also a suicide hotline number (800-273-8255). Don't be afraid to reach out. There are several people here to help.

So many people are clueless about their mental health, so please take care of it.



Source: CERN and European Organization for Nuclear Research

JAIYA BRADEN
BUSINESS MANAGER

The Northwest varsity show choir, 14 Karat Gold will compete for the first time in the national show choir competition in Branson, Missouri on Apr. 30. There, the opposition will be 11 of the top schools in the nation.

14 KG has won more competitions than in previous years.

"It's been probably one of our most successful years," said Jared Hansen, who teaches Beginning Piano, Drama One and Vocal Music. "We've won a couple competitions and come in second a couple times and in terms of recent history, that's pretty good."

Like every season, the show choir puts together a show in the beginning part of the school year to use for competitions.

"[This year has] the highest energy show I've been a part of," said senior Sydney Millsap, who has been a participant in show choir for four years.

Musical director searches for fall show

JORDAN JENIK
DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

Musicals have always been a big part of a school's extra curricular activities, but what exactly goes into the process of producing them? There's auditions, rehearsals, backstage crew setting up and opening night. However, the process of picking a musical isn't as straightforward as it seems.

"We try to look at the strength of our kids that we have coming back and the strengths of the programs... [it] doesn't necessarily have to be an individual kid but just the strengths, do we have stronger girls, do we have stronger guys," said music director Jeff Vyhildal. Some shows are more geared towards dancing and choreography, while others contain more singing.

"It really just comes down to picking a show you think you have enough kids to fill those lead roles, not necessarily casting it ahead

Dancing into the nation's spotlight

Never before has 14 KG met the criteria to compete at national level. Last year there was no regional competition in any of the six regions due to COVID-19.

"They just took the top 12, some from each region that they thought would make it to nationals," Millsap said.

Even though the junior varsity group, Bella Voce, didn't make it to nationals, enthusiasm continues to build.

"I'm excited. We've been rebuilding our program. The Vyhildals have been working very hard to keep building us up and getting us better, better and better," said sophomore Bethany Hulinsky, who has been in the show choir for two years.

Not often does a small Nebraska town get noticed on the national level. Among those who keep tabs on show choirs, Northwest will be recognizable for 14 KG. It also gives local representation for the Northwest fine arts.

"It just proves that they [Northwest] have a show choir program worth supporting and the

just whole music program because the band's a big part of it too," Millsap said.

The show choir has high hopes but realistic goals when it comes to how they will place.

"We always tell the kids, regardless of what we do, even if we get 12th place out of 12, it's still the top 12 out of the country," Hansen said.

As the long anticipated date approaches, 14 KG works hard to ready themselves for the competition.

"I'm excited, it'll be fun just to do it one more time," Hansen said. "Rock n' Roll!"

Varsity show choir, 14 KG, presents their show for competition.

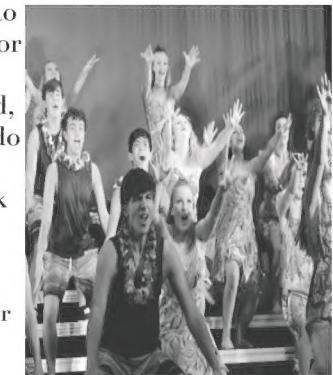


Photo courtesy of Darbie Mazour

of time, but knowing I've got five girls that could potentially play this one part and then when you have auditions, that's when you really start to narrow things down," Vyhildal said. And it's not just the strengths of the actors that they have to study. The scripts and music is a section of the play to tackle as well, taking many hours to study each script and components of the musical.

"I'd say we (the directors) spend at least 200 to 250 hours researching musicals," Vyhildal said. "I probably spent a little over 300 just listening to music and looking at different scripts and trying to figure out what works best for our kids." There's also the issue of some musicals being inappropriate, or too violent for a high school production. Many families have young children that also like to watch the musical. However, the musical is run by the administration so they understand what's going on and the musical is approved to be put into production.

"I usually will go to the administration just say, 'hey, here's what we're thinking,'" Vyhildal said. "It's not just me, it's Mrs. Vyhildal who does all who does all of the drama stuff and I usually talk with Mr. Hansen about it. It's very much a team aspect in picking it, and then if I think there's something that needs to be changed I'll say, 'here's what I think is a little racy,' but I will never put anything on stage that I'm not okay with my kids watching."

The Northwest musical next year was going to be *Kinky Boots*, a musical based on the 2005 movie *Kinky Boots*. It tells the story of Charlie Price, who inherited a shoe factory from his father. Charlie forms an unlikely partnership with drag queen Lola to produce a line of high-heeled boots and save the business. However, due to complaints, the musical was decided to not be done. As for now, the next production remains a mystery, but auditions are still being held in May.

Extending student surveillance

EMMA SMITH
ASSISTANT EDITOR

School limits access to Google extensions:

Mid April, Northwest implemented a rule for student Chromebooks: Google extensions are now limited or removed. Extensions are tools such as Grammarly that allow students to use sites in other tabs without having to switch to the website. Google extensions can also be anything from ad blockers to certain games. When this rule was enforced by Technology Coordinator Brian Gibson, several students had concerns.

"For my English class... I read SparkNotes," said senior Bishop Placke. "And now when I'm reading through the summaries, there are these animated ads that distract you a little bit, so it slightly slows you down."

Placke wasn't alone in this concern. A Google Form poll was sent out to all students

(648 total) on Apr. 28 asking about their use of Google extensions, what they used them for and how their removal has affected them. Out of the 41 responses, 85.4% said they used Google extensions, and 43.9% said they used extensions all the time. Senior Taylor Paul shared what she used the Google extensions for before their removal.

"[I used] Offline Google Docs," said Paul. "I use this all of the time because I spend most of my time on a bus, in the car and away from WiFi due to my heavy involvement in activities. Offline Google Docs allows me to work on my homework away from home."

While students have their concerns, it turns out they were never supposed to have unlimited access to Google extensions in the first place.

"The Google extensions were removed as part of a policy that has always been in place for our filtering purposes for school," Gibson said. "There's a best practices that you need to

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go through, a script, and it was one thing that should have been turned off a long time ago but it wasn't."

Some people may be confused why Google extensions would go against school policy as it is a useful tool for some students.

"Having it on allowed kids to install any extension, including extensions that were malicious," Gibson said. "So we had to remove that and allow only those that were educational."

While students may not like the removal of extensions, some understand why they were removed.

"There's not necessarily anything wrong with some of them being removed," Placke said. "But I think there were some that were worth having that should be brought back."

To quell any concerns, Google extensions will be limited, but not entirely removed. To request a Google extension be added, stop by Gibson's office or send him an email.

Hall County creativity

MELISA KIKIC
CONTENT MANAGER

In preparation for the Hall County Fair approaching, art teachers looked through all art of this past year to choose what is displayed. This includes Beau Studley's art classes and Matt Hinkel's photography classes.

"It gives students an opportunity to put their artwork on display, and then the whole county can go out and check it out," Studley said. "There's sculptures, paintings... anything and everything can be chosen. All art classes will have something going."

For art classes, there is space for around 175 to 200 display pieces from Northwest, while photography classes has between 50 and 70 pictures. Students who are not in photography can also display their pictures.

"I do have some [students] throughout the year that have taken really good sports pictures, so I have a couple of those pictures that I'm putting in there," Hinkel said. "I usually go through and pick my favorites. For photography class, we do a wall of fame... every week with our assignments. I pick my

favorites from all of those, and those are the ones we put in the art show."

For both classes, the teachers pick their favorite pieces from the ones they have seen, so there is not a specific criteria students have to meet.

"Sometimes it's uniqueness," Hinkel said. "Sometimes it's creativity. Sometimes it's just taking a good picture. It's usually just the best of the best from the different assignments that we do throughout the year."

Junior Madeline Stratman had her own art chosen for last year's fair. She is currently in Art IV.

"I do acrylic paintings, and I do realistic [paintings]," Stratman said. "So, basically portrait paintings with my own little spin on them. Art is a great stress reliever and having art submitted also looks great on a resume."

There is no set due date for the art, since artwork from the beginning of the year to shortly before the displays are set up is accepted. The Hall County Fair will be open this July 20-24 at Fonner Park.



Photo courtesy of Matt Hinkel
Studley and Hinkel work together to set up their displays for the upcoming Hall County Fair.



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Behind-the-scenes of planning prom

EMELIA RICHLING
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Stowed away on the wrestling deck above the main gym, a team of students and teachers found a glittering gold star that inspired their vision for prom, but setting up the event began long before the discovery of the prop.

Shortly after junior class officers were elected near the end of the first semester, they began to create the framework for the dance, recruiting additional team members to assist in promoting prom, building props and staying on track to have the theme "Somewhere Only We Know" finished by April 9.

"Our thought process [for the theme] was, if you went out to a pasture during a bonfire, what would you see?" said Tara Martin, a Spanish teacher and one of the junior class sponsors. "If you give it a more vague feeling, you can make it anything you want to."

The creative liberty of the theme stemmed from finding the gold star, and the six students and two teachers developed the idea beyond it. Near the beginning of the year, the students researched decoration ideas and made a decision about what they wanted it to look like, an ever-evolving idea that adapted to fit the image in their minds.

"For the decorations, we all

agreed on what we wanted to order," said Elizabeth Morrow, the class president. "Then, the teachers approved it, and it got approved by the administrators. There are stars, greenery, and celestial stuff. It'll be pretty."

Every day during advisement, the students rotate between creating centerpieces, building props and painting posters to promote prom across the school. Whether organizing materials in Martin's classroom or taking measurements of the gym, students have managed to stay on top of the tasks even with so much to do.

"The students have been diligent with coming in every day," Martin said. "They're awesome."

The countless hours spent in preparation continued in the several weeks before prom, as the class met during additional evenings to add finishing touches and assemble the final pieces of the star that inspired it all.

"When planning it, we only have the idea in our minds," said Brooklyn Colburn, the junior class vice president. "So I am excited to walk in and see everyone enjoying what we have worked so hard to create over these last several months."



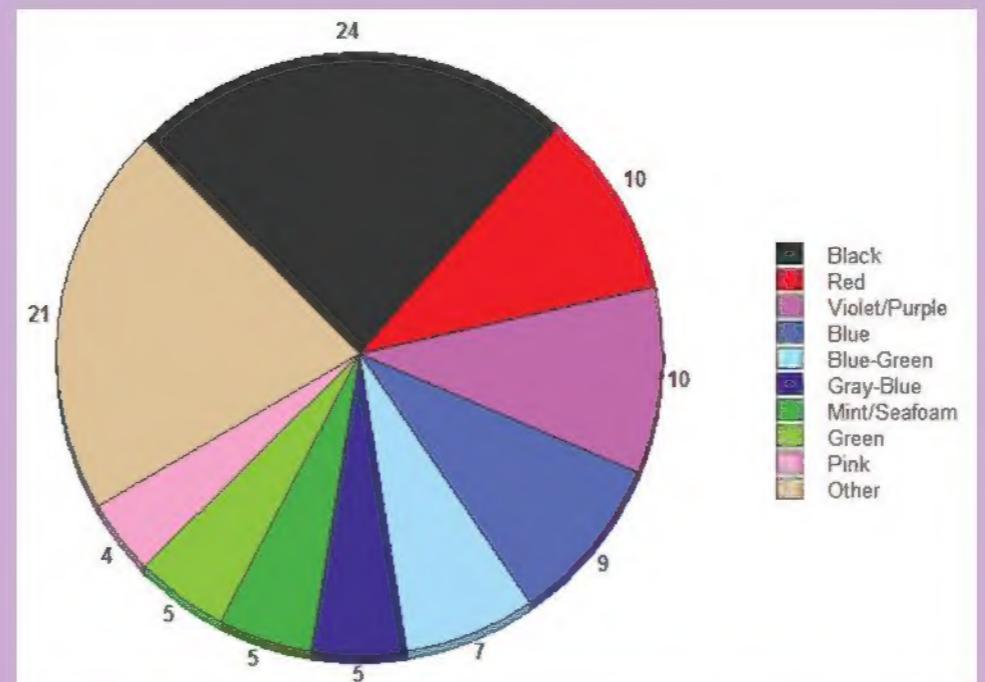
Photo courtesy of Emily Krupicka

TOP: Junior Class President Elizabeth Morrow prepares the materials to create the clouds in the weeks leading up to prom.



Photo courtesy of Emily Krupicka

BOTTOM: Juniors Autumn Graczyk and Gabriel Holmes joined the prom committee as additional help. During advisement, they untangle flowers that will be used as decor.



This year's prom color palette

In March, a Google form was sent via email to the entire student body (651 students) asking what color they were wearing to prom. Out of 100 students who responded from March 3 to March 29, the results show that the most popular prom-wear colors, in order of rank, are black in first, red and purple tied for second and blue in third. The least popular colors were blue-violet, yellow, orange, magenta, gray, rose gold and bronze, with each making up 1% of the total results.

Did you know...?

- Prom is shortened from "promenade," a slow introductory walk debutantes (fashionable upper-class young women) did at their first ball. (slate.com)
- The first recorded prom in history took place in 1894 when the male students at Amherst College, Massachusetts, invited the female students from Smith College to dine and dance. It became an official event across the country in 1928. (little-things.com, jovani.com)
- Corsages, when first invented in the 18th century, were larger and meant to be worn around the waist. They were also commonly produced and exchanged by female escorts. (britannica.com)
- In the '50s, some school principals banned prom because the festivities were getting out of hand and the whole event was deemed "psychologically wounding" to students. (seventeen.com)
- President John F. Kennedy once appeared at a prom in the Beverly Hilton Hotel, California, in 1963 after a room mix-up; he was meant to have a fundraiser in the same room, but allowed the school to have their prom there, moving his fundraiser to a few smaller rooms in the same venue. (seventeen.com)

A new position was offered at the beginning of the year 2022 for dean of students. Since then, Connections teacher Bill Bombeck has been elected to take over the position at the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year. Outside of who will be taking this role, many are still unsure of what the dean of students does for our school. But his does not prevent anyone from feeling excited for the upcoming change.

"The dean of students position implies that I am going to be on the administrative team and will be doing some student discipline, taking care of attendance, tardies, supervising at games," said Bombeck. "But I also get to do some evaluations of teachers, too."

Bombeck's transition from teaching in a classroom to being an admin is reward-

A final farewell: Remembering the teachers leaving

JAIYA BRADEN
BUSINESS MANAGER

As students finish off the school year with excitement for what is to come, some teachers look toward the future ready for change. Accompanying the retiring teachers, there are three leaving Northwest in favor of other jobs. This is a farewell.

How long have you been at NW?

- Shane Fernau: "This is my third consecutive year, but it was also my first job back in 2010."
- Mark Freeling: "Five years."
- Kenzie Mollring: "Ten years."

What subjects have you taught?

- Fernau: "The subjects that I teach within alternative teaching is social/emotional learning."
- Freeling: "Chemistry, physics, biology."
- Mollring: "I teach special ed. I have been National Honor Society sponsor for about seven years."

Bombeck for dean of students

ing and the change is welcome.

"I think I'm pretty flexible. I'm easy going, but can be firm when I need to be. I get along. I can build relationships pretty well, get along with kids pretty easily [and] build relationships where relationships need to be built," said Bombeck.

The Dean of students has to involve working and getting along with students and teachers alike.

"I'm excited," said Bombeck. "I got my admin degree a few years ago and have been applying to other schools to try and become an admin. I think this is a great fit because I get to stay at Northwest, which I love, and stay with colleagues I've come to know very well and students that I've had relationships with and become a mentor to."

Although the full effect of the new position cannot be seen until next year, the aftermath of the position is showing

that it will be extremely promising. Even Bombeck's family is looking forward to the change.

"My family is excited. My two daughters don't really understand yet. They just know I'm not going to be teaching in the classroom," said Bombeck. "My wife's excited. She's been on this journey with me since I started my admin degree and interviewed at other places, so she's excited for this opportunity"



Photo courtesy of Lydia Vlcek

How has your NW experience been?

- Fernau: "It has been phenomenal. It was actually a very tough decision to decide to leave after this year. Northwest has been a great job for me."
- Freeling: "Good."
- Mollring: "It has been good. I've enjoyed getting to know students and staff."

What's your favorite memory?

- Fernau: "Favorite memory would probably have to be Mr. [Bill] Bombeck, the co-teacher here, our very first time going out into the community and doing service learning with the kids three years ago, he almost chopped off his thumb with a hedge trimmer. That was an exciting ER visit. I would say then, after that, the best memory would probably have to be the pep rallies, like the beard challenge."
- Freeling: "Getting the new science labs."
- Mollring: "Watching students grow and watching students gain confidence in their abilities and seeing them accomplish things

they didn't think they were able to do."

What are your plans for after you leave?

- Fernau: "I ended up taking a middle school counseling job at Walnut Middle School."
- Freeling: "I'm going into the Witness Protection Program."
- Mollring: "I'm going to North Platte to teach middle school."

What will you miss about NW?

- Fernau: "Northwest has really felt like a smaller-than-what-it-is school. I came from a very small school in a small community-300 people. I graduated with 12 people in my class. This gives me that feel, but it's not-there's 750 kids. I think that's what I'm going to miss about Northwest, the teachers and the relationships I've built."
- Freeling: "The people."
- Mollring: "I will miss the relationships with students. The people. I've gotten to work with several families."

Aarya Bhatt's writing award

MELISA KIKIC
CONTENT MANAGER

High school students from all over Nebraska were given the chance to submit essays, poems and short stories for the Emerging Writers Contest through the University of Nebraska at Kearney. In the end, eight students were acknowledged for their writing talents. Sophomore Aarya Bhatt was one of them. He achieved first place in the short story category for his work titled "The Boy".

"I wrote it in early January," Bhatt said. "It was about an 18-year-old just figuring out what to do with his vote."

"The Meaning of Democracy," an essay written during World War II by American author E. B. White, inspired the prompt for this contest. Natalie Starostka, Aarya's current English teacher, was the one to offer this contest to the class, since the theme fit with the Julius Caesar unit in Advanced English 10. Students were instructed to write about what democracy meant to them, and if they wanted to, submit their writing for a chance at a cash prize from UNK. Bhatt was awarded with

Gaps in Grading

CASEY PAYNE
STAFF WRITER

When high school is thought of, how many struggles come to mind? One? Ten? A hundred? According to emersonhospital.org, 62% of high school students report levels of high stress. Stress is only one of the many problems students face.

There are tons of problems many can think of off the top of their head, but today the focus will be on the Northwest grading system. The grading system at NW is on a seven point scale, while most other public schools are on a 10-point grading scale.

"Compared to my last school, I would say that the NW grading system is a whole lot more difficult. We were on the 10 point scale grading system, which was a lot more lenient than the 7 point because it gave you more room to work with your grades," sophomore Andrew Burnham said.

The three points between the seven-point grading scale and the 10 point system make the 10 system a lot harder. However, on

\$100 for his writing.

"I was really excited when Aarya told me he had won," Starostka said. "It was refreshing and exciting to know that his hard work that he put into it got recognition. Writing contests are a great way to recognize students' talents and abilities. We see it all the time as teachers in the classroom, but to put it out there publicly for people outside of our school to recognize that, I think that just shows how talented our kids are and how important education is."

Melanie Haith, Bhatt's freshman English teacher, believes writing contests are beneficial for students by providing feedback and allowing an opportunity to showcase skills. She was very proud to hear of Bhatt's award, saying that it shows his motivation and skill.

"Aarya was a very bright student," Haith said. "He expresses himself well with writing. He has a large vocabulary, and he writes well as far as his conventions are concerned. He has higher-level thinking skills that I think really help him express himself."

For students who would like to submit their own writing, April is known as poetry

the other side of the spectrum, some report that the current grading scale is fairly easy.

"I think it [the NW grading system] would actually make it [succeeding] easier because then the expectations are higher. Then, you just expect yourself to do more than others," sophomore Whitney Wissing said.

In high school, motivation is key. Without the drive to complete necessary tasks, high school will be nearly impossible. How motivating is the NW grading system, if it's a motivating factor at all?

"Probably because then you have to try harder," said Wissing.

Several hundreds of students all over the world struggle with motivation, as well as adults. With that being said every aspect of school should try to be as motivating for students as possible.

"For some, yeah, for some they want to try and get that good grade but some don't because they think it's too much," freshman Cali Gutierrez said.

Even with motivation being a positive thing about NW grading system, there are still tons of other positives and negatives hidden

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month, so keep an eye out for poetry contests popping up in the next few weeks. Starostka recommends Katrina Rother, school librarian, as a source for learning about writing contests to join. Lastly, keep an eye out for posters around the school advertising contests.



Photo courtesy Lydia Vlcek

within the system.

A negative that was spotted was "[It] could stress some people out when there's no need for it," said Gutierrez

However, there are also positives that can be said about the Northwest grading system.

"We try harder, and we expect more out of ourselves," said Wissing.

High school provides students with enough obstacles to last a lifetime, but the grading system particularly provides people in extracurricular activities with more of a challenge, or does it?

"I don't think it really does because it's all based on grades" Burnham said "I think it would help for the people that need it, but personally, no".

All in all, the grading system has a lot of positives and negatives to it, but does it make it easier or harder to succeed?

"For people who it's hard for, I feel like it's because they're not trying or they just have no time to but for people who it's easy for, they're just trying".

Each year, the girls' soccer team shows their grit on the grass. This year, the team faces new challenges as they expand their fields and have two new assistant coaches, Ryan Carlson and Troy Keller. Despite these changes, the girls continue to work and master their kicks.

Being on the soccer team for four years has been one of the highlights of senior Alexis Julesgard's high school experience.

"They (the new coaches) brought in a lot of new drills for us to do," Julesgard said. "And they help us during games a lot."

Practice typically starts with stretches, followed by a variety of drills, focusing on a specific skill and concludes in a scrimmage. A change in coaching really brought a change in how the team practices.

Although the team welcomes two

Kicking off girls' soccer

new assistant coaches, head coach Jessica Herrmann has been helping them bring the team to victory throughout the season.

After working drills, teams split up into offensive and defensive to build on their skills as a group. Practice is different each day, as the needs of the team are assessed and accommodated.

"I'm a left back and also a forward," Julesgard said. "Our formation has four defenders, three midfielders who are running everywhere around the field and our forwards try to score the most goals."

Within soccer, there are three main positions. Each player usually sticks to one position, but are able to adapt to any during the fast-paced nature of a game.

"I'm usually a forward while playing for JV, so I just try to get the ball as much as I can, and then for varsity I usually play the 7-11 position where you have to help pass and really have to balance playing both offense and defense," said Junior Schlyer

Packer.

The girl's first game was March 24 against Columbus Lakeview, bringing home a win for the team. They have eight games left on

the season, depending on how the district, conference and state tournaments go.

Senior Alexis Julesgard and freshman Evelyn Keller chase the ball during practice. The girls won the semifinal game against Lakeview again April 18. The girls compete in the district determining if they'll be allowed to proceed to the state tournament.



Photo courtesy of Abigail Trausch

Players take a swing at trying tennis

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

NW co-ops with Grand Island Central Catholic to optimize team performance and ensure they have enough members to compete. The atmosphere has been encouraging for the NW players as they gain experience against a variety of GICC students, whether they are new as well or have been competing for years. Practices occur after school and on weekends.

"I always dreamed about playing tennis," said senior Laetitia Hoehnisch. "But I never really went out for it since I never had time for it. Now, I am just trying to get the routine down and work on my footwork and how we have to hold our racquets."

Since training is occurring from the ground up, they are divided into four prac-

tice courts based on skill level to ensure they are competing with others who will be able to challenge them. Students have the opportunity to switch to different courts if they win or lose against players in courts above or below them.

"I really like my court," Hoehnisch said. "It's fun to talk and learn new skills together."

Although all NW students are new to the feel of tennis competitions, freshman Logan Hinrichs received a few months of lessons before first stepping onto the competition scene.

"My sister played tennis all four years," Hinrichs said. "She liked it a lot, so that is what inspired me to carry on the tradition."

As the players learn the proper technique of serving and keeping score with

the unique tennis system, the fundamental skills will be essential in building their foundation for competitions throughout the season and into the next few years.

"My goal for the NW girls is that they enjoy tennis and put time into improving for the future," Lowry said. "I hope they learn some tennis and understand it takes a lot of work to become better at tennis and able to compete."



Photo courtesy of Abigail Trausch
Freshman Logan Hinrichs serves the ball to her teammates during practice at Ryder Park.

EMMA SMITH
ASSISTANT EDITOR

"Arcane" is an animated series that became a Netflix hit when it came out on Nov. 6 2021. For those brand new to the world of "League of Legends," (An online battle arena game) "Arcane" does a good job explaining the history of the setting: twin cities Piltover, the overcity, and Zaun, the undercity. Early on, it's made clear that Piltover is more successful and rich where science and technology excel, while Zaun is a poor and violent city where anything goes. Piltover abuses its power to force Zaun to follow their rules. It develops a unique and sometimes jarring distinction between the characters, specifically those who grew up in Piltover and those who grew up in Zaun.

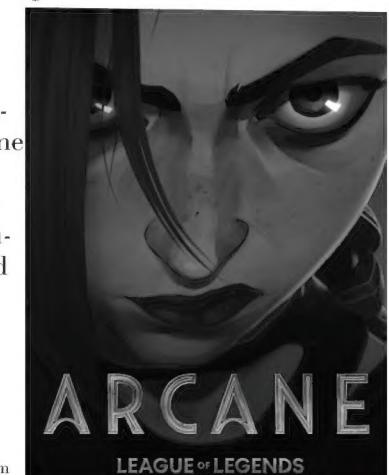
The main characters, two "League of Legends" characters, Jinx (Powder), and her older sister Vi. Jinx and Vi are Zaunites, being raised by the peacekeeper and leader Vander alongside their two adoptive brothers, Clagger and Mylo. Vi is a natural-born leader and works well with her siblings, causing trouble wherever they go. Things go very wrong when they accidentally blow up a Piltover scientist's house

Appreciating Arcane

after an attempted robbery. Piltover's police force make their way to Zaun in search of the siblings. When Vander refuses to give them up, he turns himself in. That's when villain Silco, who wants control of Zaun, makes his appearance. With the arrival of Silco, lives are lost, family is torn apart and new sides of characters are revealed. Watching how Jinx and Vi's relationship develops with the show is difficult as what was once a close, loving bond falls apart and changes into something rather unexpected and dark.

Meanwhile, the scientist whose home was destroyed worked to combine magic and technology using illegal supplies. The scientist, Jayce Talis, was put under permanent house arrest until he teamed up with fellow scientist Viktor to forge hextech, the combination of modern technology and magic. With the creation of hextech, the two make wild advancements to society and technology. Learning about hextech and seeing such excitement about being able to change the world from these characters breathes a new life into the show. This presents a more positive side and gives the viewer a break from the negativity and harsh angst that the show originally pushed.

By the season's finale, it's hard to tell where Jinx and Vi are going to end or just how big hextech will get. "Arcane" is a masterfully-written show with deep meanings behind nearly every scene. The gorgeous art style and the meaningful connections between characters wonderfully paints Vi and Jinx's backstories in such a way that even those brand new to "League of Legends" can't help but anticipate every episode. The show also makes an effort to be inclusive, with characters of all shapes, sizes, ethnicities, races, gender identities and sexualities, everyone can relate to a character. "Arcane" is a must-watch for anyone who enjoys good character dynamics, beautifully animated designs and a well-made storyline.



Source: www.Netflix.com

Trust the stars, Taurus!

AUDRIANNA WISEMAN
EVENT COORDINATOR

As April showers bring in May flowers, bulls begin to graze and bask in the floral beauty that spreads across the land. Star sign Taurus, the bull, can expect to do a lot of said basking this May.

For both Taurus and other signs, this month will bring sudden but effective solutions to most problems. As this happens, though, a new issue may surface; a lot of pressure might start showing up in your life. This can come from work or school deadlines, personal or interpersonal expectations to meet or anything else that could stress you out. Not to worry, though, as once this period is over, good vibes are sure to come your way! Relaxing, happy and otherwise pleasant times will make up for the negativity brought upon by these things.

This May is a good time to broaden your pursuits in academic, physical or artistic hobbies and activities. These interests may or may not be linked to a sudden desire to travel, which is good, as you can expect safe and exciting trips this month; the longer the distance, the better! You will want to consider talking to new people and deepening your already-existing friendships. Keep your eyes peeled for any business opportunities that may come your way or sprout directly from your own mind, as right now is a great time to grow that stack of green.

If you decide to travel, be careful about when you do, as Mercury retrograde could put a damper on your plans. This can mean communication systems or technology breakdowns, lost items and travel delays. This time will also bring you a lot of nervous anxiety, which is why it is a good thing Mercury only stays in retrograde for three weeks, starting May 10.

Taurus students can expect a great end

to this school year, with increased interest and focus in academics through the last bit of it and a guarantee for good grades in any sort of competitive exams outside of school. This month is also the perfect time to seek higher education. If you apply for scholarships or admittance to colleges, you are almost sure to make it into at least one!

So get out there, Taurus, and make the world your oyster! Actual bulls may not eat oysters, but with all of this good luck, Taurus can do anything.



Mercurius retrogradus in genitivo vno. In collis urbis inuenitur splendida unus in portu vna. Si e' auro'

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